

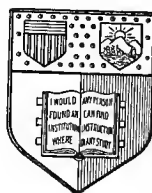
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Cornell University Library
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Handbook for readers concerning the new

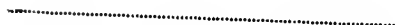


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New York
State College of Agriculture
At Cornell University
Ithaca, N. Y.

Library



NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY

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HANDBOOK FOR READERS

Concerning the New State Library and its
home in the State Education Building

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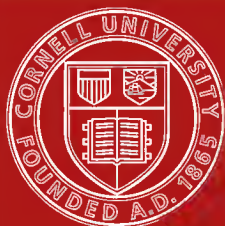
ALBANY

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

1913

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Cornell University
Library

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STATE EDUCATION BUILDING

STATE EDUCATION BUILDING

HOME OF THE NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY

A separate pamphlet giving a general description of the State Education Building has been issued and will be given free to any person interested. This handbook aims to give only such information about the State Library and its collections as will acquaint the reader with the layout and material equipment of the Library. The following general description of the Library's quarters is taken with slight modifications from the Library Journal for October 1912.

The State Education Building, which is the home of the New York State Library, is located on Washington avenue, facing the Capitol. It has a length of 590 feet, and the entire building has a depth of about 125 feet. Back of this, 175 feet, extends the stack wing, from a point a little east of the center of the main parallelogram, thus giving the building an extreme depth of 285 feet. In designing the front, the architect tried to secure a striking architectural effect without sacrificing sufficient light. A striking and very beautiful effect has been secured.

The first floor of the building is used chiefly for the general offices of the Education Department. On the same floor are the chief administrative workrooms of the library, that is, the quarters of the order, catalog, and shelf sections.

From the main entrance the public reading rooms are reached by a staircase 25 feet wide, leading directly into the central rotunda, the most striking feature of the building. It is cruciform, like an Italian church. Both the nave and the transept, as they may aptly be termed, are vaulted and at the crossing are crowned with a dome which runs up through three stories. The center of this rotunda forms the architectural center of the building, and from there access is had to the five principal reading rooms; or better stated, perhaps, a group of five special libraries — law, medicine, periodicals, legislative

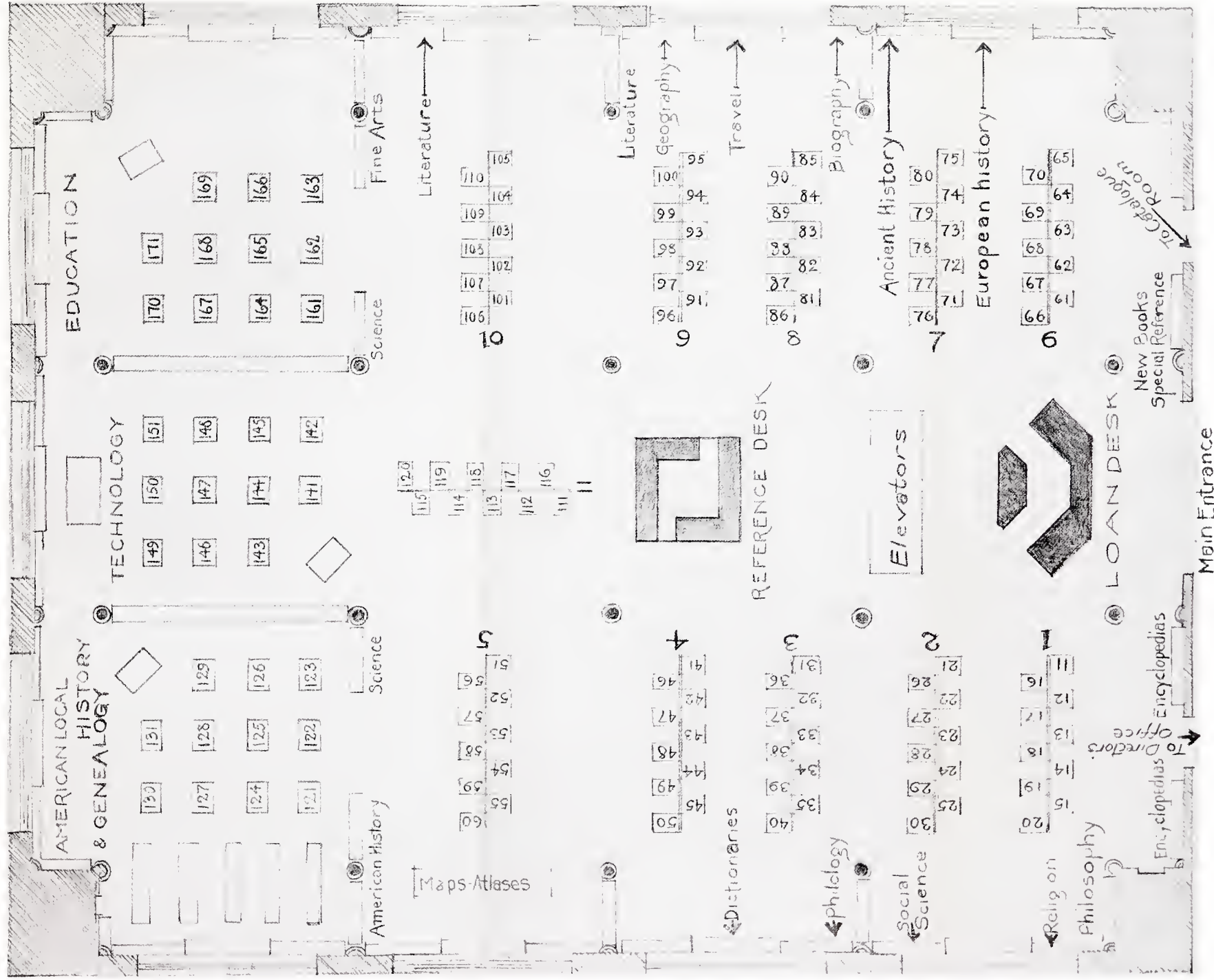
reference and public documents, and the principal reference room. The latter seems likely to rank as one of the handsomest and most satisfactory reading rooms in the country. One hundred twenty-five by 107 feet and 55 feet high, extending through the second and third floors, it is an adaptation of the reading room of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The ceiling is composed of twelve domes, supported on slender, ornamental columns, the domes being done in decorated tile, while the side walls are in artificial limestone.

On the third floor are the Division of Educational Extension (corresponding to the library commission in other states), the Library for the Blind and the Library School.

The books are housed in a series of stackrooms conveniently situated with reference to the five reading rooms. The main stack, designed to accommodate close to 2,000,000 volumes, is directly under the principal reading room floor. Five of the stack floors are the full size of the reading room. At the east and west sides of the two upper stack floors extend workrooms 165 feet long by 25 feet broad. Corridor stacks between the law and legislative reference rooms and between the medical and periodical rooms provide shelving for 300,000 volumes in addition to the books shelved in the alcoves of these special libraries. Special stacks on the third floor accommodate 100,000 volumes for the traveling libraries and the collection of books for the blind.

SCOPE OF THE STATE LIBRARY

The State Library can not hope to be a universal library collecting all the important books on all subjects. Government libraries of this type almost always receive the larger part of their acquisitions automatically and without cost through copyright deposits. The State Library has no such resource and no Legislature, however generous, can be expected to finance so large an undertaking. The situation had to be faced anew after the fire and a choice made between two plans, either to be a fairly good general library but eminent in no field, or to be a specialized library notable for its collections on those subjects most closely connected



GENERAL READING ROOM

with the history and activities of the State, but relatively weak in other fields. The Library authorities have from the founding of the Library consistently approved the second plan and from time to time determined the scope of its various collections. These include bibliography and library economy, law, medicine, history, education, the political and social sciences, including government documents, natural science and technology, manuscripts and archives.

It has seemed wise at this time to indicate herein rather the scope of the proposed collections in these subjects, than to attempt to enumerate or describe present holdings. So rapidly are the collections growing that such a description, if attempted, would be out of date almost before it could be printed.

GENERAL READING ROOM: ROOM 228

A general description of the room has been given. Certain details concerning the working arrangements need to be added.

Directly facing the main entrance is the loan desk. Here registered borrowers should make application for and return books. Back of the loan desk are the private elevators used in bringing books from the stacks. Back of the elevators and nearly in the center of the room is the reference desk, where all requests for information and books for use in the library should be made.

A general reference library is shelved in the main portion of the reading room. Larger representation is given to certain subjects, such as political and social science and American history, subjects peculiarly within the scope of the Library, than to current literature, art, philosophy and travel. The attempt is made, however, to include the most important reference material on all subjects. In the usage of the Library a reference book does not necessarily mean an encyclopedia or a dictionary. It means any book of high informational value. It may be a textbook, a history of some subject, a handbook or a periodical.

The rear of the reading room is divided into three alcoves devoted to three of the Library's special collections: American local history and genealogy, technology,

and education. Special reference assistants are in attendance during the day to render any possible aid to readers. The open shelf collections in the reading room numbering about 25,000 volumes, may be freely consulted without formality. The arrangement of the reference collection by subjects is roughly shown on the accompanying plan of the main reading room.

For the convenience of readers, individual desks are provided. Most of these are equipped with a shelf for holding books, while the others have drawers.

PERIODICAL REFERENCE ROOM: ROOM 219

Periodicals are recognized as a highly important part of a reference library. An attempt at adequate provision for the use of this class of material has been made in the periodical reference room. In metal filing cases which line the wall are arranged in alphabetical order the current unbound numbers of all periodicals regularly received by the Library, with the exception of those titles attracted to special reference collections. In the adjoining stack the bound sets of the most used of these periodicals are kept. Here, so far as the Library owns them, are all the sets indexed in the best known periodical indexes, "Poole," "Readers guide," "Magazine subject index," etc. These indexes themselves and a number of more special indexes are available in the periodical reference room.

Current issues of a number of the most used periodicals, protected by binders, are displayed on the tables.

PUBLIC CATALOG ROOM: ROOM 229

In room 229, immediately adjoining the main reading room, is the public card catalog of which somewhat detailed description is given on page 13. In the same room is a working collection of subject bibliography intended to supplement the catalog. Any extended research involves use of the catalog and bibliographies. The reference librarian has a desk in the public catalog room and may be freely consulted as to the resources of the Library, methods of obtaining books or information of any kind needed in the course of investigation.



GENERAL READING ROOM

LAW LIBRARY: ROOM 209

The law library has practically complete collections of all American, English, Irish, Scotch and Canadian court reports, together with the leading digests, tables of cases, citation books and other legal bibliographic apparatus necessary to the convenient and exhaustive study of this material. It also has an unusually extensive collection of American statute law, including the laws of the colonial period. Much of this material is important not only as legal material but also as rare early Americana, some volumes of which form important examples of the history of printing in this country. The statute law of the Dominion of Canada, the several Canadian provinces, England, Ireland and Scotland is represented by excellent working collections.

The Library has a complete set of the records and briefs in the Supreme Court of the United States since 1874, and in the New York Court of Appeals, the four Appellate Divisions of the New York Supreme Court, and in many of the cases reported in the New York Miscellaneous Reports, since the time of the fire. Every effort will be made to carry these collections of the records and briefs in the New York courts as far back as possible.

The Library already has a very large collection of American legal textbooks, cyclopedias, dictionaries etc. and aims to be practically exhaustive in this field. For the present at least, only the leading English and Canadian legal textbooks of practical importance to the American lawyer will be secured.

So far as possible all legal periodicals in the English language, with a selection from those in other languages, will be acquired. Many of these sets are already in the Library.

The Library has a very extensive collection of the reports of bar associations and legal societies, the nucleus of which (about 725 volumes) is, with the exception of some items in the Harvard law school library, the well-known collection which Mr Francis Rawle of Philadelphia accumulated during a period of many years.

Much success has already been achieved in replacing

the former notable collection of the journals, debates and documents of American constitutional conventions.

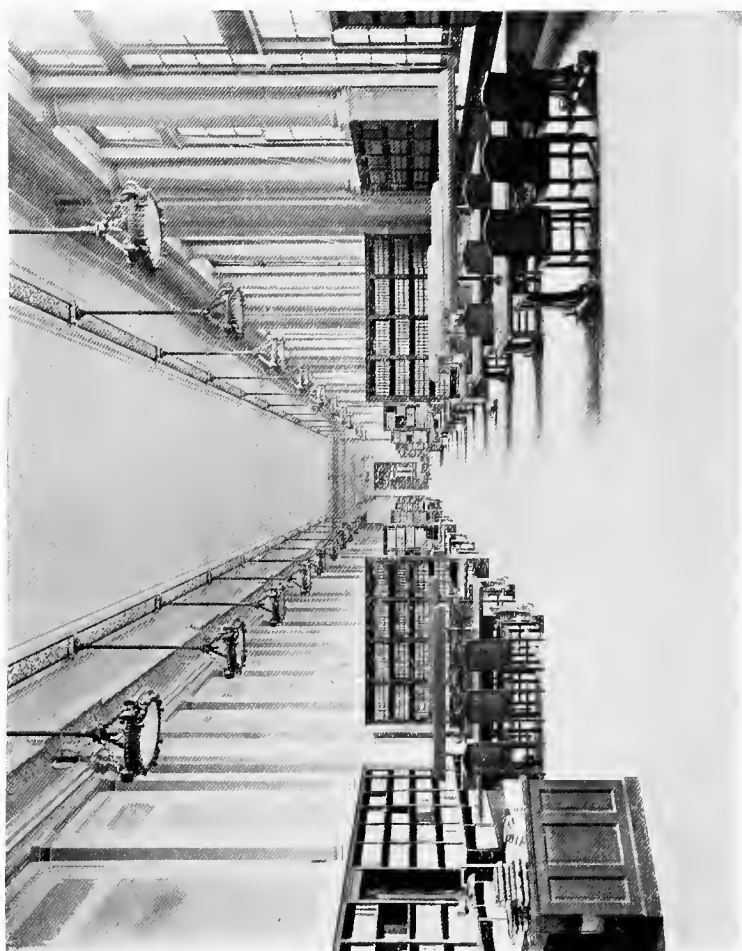
Considerable progress has also been made on collections of legal history and biography, literature of the law, international law, constitutional law, and trials, and continued attention will be given to these topics.

No systematic work has yet been done in the direction of collecting material in the field of foreign law, outside of English-speaking peoples, but in general it will be the policy of the Library to secure such of the statute law and legal literature of foreign countries as will be useful to our State courts and departments in passing upon foreign questions coming before them, and to the Legislature for a comparative study of legislation.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY: ROOM 212

This section contains a special collection on subjects of legislation, general sociology, and public affairs, and is organized to be of particular assistance to legislators and individual students of public questions. The collection is principally made up of special bibliographies, selected matter clipped from all classes of periodicals and newspapers, pamphlet material of both official and private origin, legislative bills, and similar ephemeral but extremely useful and valuable publications, as well as manuscript reports on the results of original research. It is kept under a special scheme of classification in a vertical filing system in the western end of the legislative library. Practically complete sets of New York legislative journals, documents, and bills are shelved in the same part of this room. Since 1890 this section has indexed the general legislation of the various states and published this and other related information in a valuable series of legislation bulletins (see page 23).

The section also contains the Library's general collections of legislative journals and documents, national, state and local, both American and foreign, and the eastern end of the legislative library and the adjacent stacks are mainly devoted to this class of material. This collection is already rich in the official publications



LAW LIBRARY

of the United States Government and of certain American states and cities. The collection will include eventually as complete a set as possible of the printed documents of the United States Government both in the collected and departmental editions, similar sets for every state in the Union, the collected edition when issued, otherwise the separate edition, of the documents of every American city with more than 25,000 population, and of all counties, cities and incorporated villages in New York State, as well as a selection from the official publications of foreign countries, made with a view to their importance in the study of comparative legislation.

MEDICAL LIBRARY: ROOM 217

The medical library aims to collect complete sets of all important medical serials, transactions of medical societies, and hospital bulletins. In addition it will have a good working collection of special treatises, cyclopedias and texts, as well as collections of medical biography and history. The library already contains over 22,000 volumes and about 3000 pamphlets, and a large number of periodicals, of which 427 are received regularly. Any licensed physician in the State can have material collected on any subject, to be used either in the library or sent to his home.

HISTORY COLLECTION

In history the Library aims to acquire:

The standard histories of all countries, especially of those European nations which were early or active colonizers of this country and which have influenced our government, people and institutions.

Americana, in the broadest sense of the term, with strong emphasis on the thirteen original colonies.

As complete a collection as possible of material relating to the State of New York, both books and manuscripts.

American local history, cartography, American imprints before 1800, New York imprints before 1825, American newspapers before 1850, besides certain selected newspapers in complete runs, American biography and

genealogy, with so much of English and foreign genealogy as may be necessary to trace early history of American families.

The Library already contains a good working collection of American local history and genealogy. The Edward Eggleston collection on American history, numbering about 5500 volumes, the William Beer collection of maps, consisting of about 300 atlases and 3000 maps, mostly American, and other purchases give a foundation for the program outlined.

EDUCATION COLLECTION

As a part of the State Education Department, the State Library is directly concerned with the entire educational system of the State. It has an extensive collection on education, somewhat richer in material relating to American educational history and administration, American theory and practice than in material relating to foreign methods. This entire collection is at the service of the teachers and schools of the State either for use in the Library or for loan to schools under the regulations governing interlibrary loans.

SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Library aims to acquire extensive collections on social, economic and political science, industrial history, and statistics. In this field lie the political and economic questions which are the subjects of legislation and of state regulation or control. On such topics as elections, suffrage, labor, taxation, banking and finance, municipal government, conservation, public utilities, insurance, charities, no pains will be spared to build up notable collections.

The Emile Levasseur collection, numbering 16,000 items, forms a remarkable basis for such a collection. Representing all modern schools of economics and political thought, but especially rich in modern French works, the collection concerns itself particularly with those practical politico-economic questions which are of vital importance to the State.

TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING

The Library will secure all useful and important journals in this field and in the selection of books will more particularly notice topics which relate to activities or enterprises in which the State is engaged: canals, railroads, highways, water storage, agriculture, public health and the engineering phases of utilities regulated by the Public service commissions.

SCIENCE

Beyond the fundamental general reference material, the State Library will specialize in science only so far as may be necessary to serve such agencies or departments of the State government as are doing scientific work. Good working collections will be made in geology, zoology, entomology, botany, with more particular attention to the economic phases of these subjects, and in chemistry as related to agriculture, the arts and commerce.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Both as the tools of research for the general student and as the field of study for the Library School, bibliography and library economy are of peculiar importance to the State Library. The attempt is being made to collect bibliography in a very broad sense; books about books; the history of printing; examples of early printed books, of notable bindings, of books from famous presses, of exceptional typography; library history; administration and publications.

The William Beer collection of approximately 2300 volumes, and the Adolf Growoll collection of about 1000 volumes on bibliography furnish a substantial basis for future growth.

MANUSCRIPTS

The collection of manuscripts consists largely of important public records obtained by gifts, purchase, or transfer from other State departments. Despite heavy losses from fire in 1911, the Library still has what, for the historian, is the most important body of archives

in the custody of the State. Among the most important individual manuscript items are:

Charter of the Colony from Charles II to the Duke of York, 1664

Duke's Laws, 1664-65

Dongan Laws, 1683-84

Constitution of the State of New York, 1777

Constitution of the State of New York, 1821

Constitution of the State of New York, 1846

Proposed constitution of the State of New York, 1867-69; rejected except sixth article.

Constitution of the State of New York, 1894

Journal of the Proceedings of the Convention of the State of New York to ratify the proposed Constitution of the United States, held at Poughkeepsie, June 17-July 26, 1788

Ratification of the proposed Constitution of the United States by the State of New York in Convention assembled at Poughkeepsie, July 26, 1788

Autograph letters and documents of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence

André Papers. 13 manuscripts

Washington's opinion of the surviving generals of the Revolution, written in the winter of 1791-92, after the defeat of Gen. Arthur St Clair by the Indians in the autumn of 1791

Draft of Washington's Farewell Address, written in the spring of 1796

Tabulated statement of Washington's household expenses in 1789

Draft of President Lincoln's first Emancipation Proclamation, September 22, 1862

Rensselaerswyck Manuscripts:

Map of the Colony of Rensselaerswyck of about 1632

Patent of the Colony of Rensselaerswyck, 1685

Commissions in the militia, as justice of the peace and as commissioner for Indian affairs to various members of the Van Rensselaer family, 1670-1768. 21 documents

Commissions to Philip Schuyler as major general in the Continental Army, 1775, and as surveyor general of the State of New York, 1781

Letters of freedom and citizenship of the City of Albany granted to Jeremy Van Rensselaer, 1733, and to Stephen Van Rensselaer, 1763

Draft of commission to Tuenis Van Der Volgen as deputy ranger of the County of Albany, from Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, 1732

Besides the manuscript archives, which in accordance with law are from time to time transferred to the State Library, by other State departments, the Library will attempt to secure all important private manuscripts that can be obtained relating to the history of the State and to the lives of its public men.

CARD CATALOG

The resources of the Library are made available to readers through the card catalog. To some of the uninitiated a large catalog may seem so complicated that no effort is made to understand it. This is a mistake. The catalog of any large library is necessarily complex, but its main principles are easily acquired and a little study soon reduces the real difficulties to a minimum. The librarians on duty are always glad to assist readers in the use of the catalog.

Explanation. The card catalog is what is known as a dictionary catalog, the cards being arranged as nearly as is practicable in alphabetic order, as the words in a dictionary are arranged. The cards are of three kinds, representing either authors of books, titles of books, or subjects treated in books, with reference from one subject to other related subjects. The author cards include not only personal names, but names of societies and governmental bodies which are authors of their proceedings, reports or other official publications. Names of editors, translators, prominent illustrators, etc. are also included among the author cards. The cards for titles include titles of periodicals, cyclopedias, anonymous books, fiction, dramas, and any other works with striking titles. The subject cards are recognized at once by their headings in red ink. Reference cards are to guide the consulter from commonly used forms of names or subjects to the heading adopted by the library. For

example, Disraeli, Benjamin, *see* Beaconsfield, Benjamin Disraeli, 1st earl of. Ornithology, *see* Birds. Oriental languages, *see also* Chinese language.

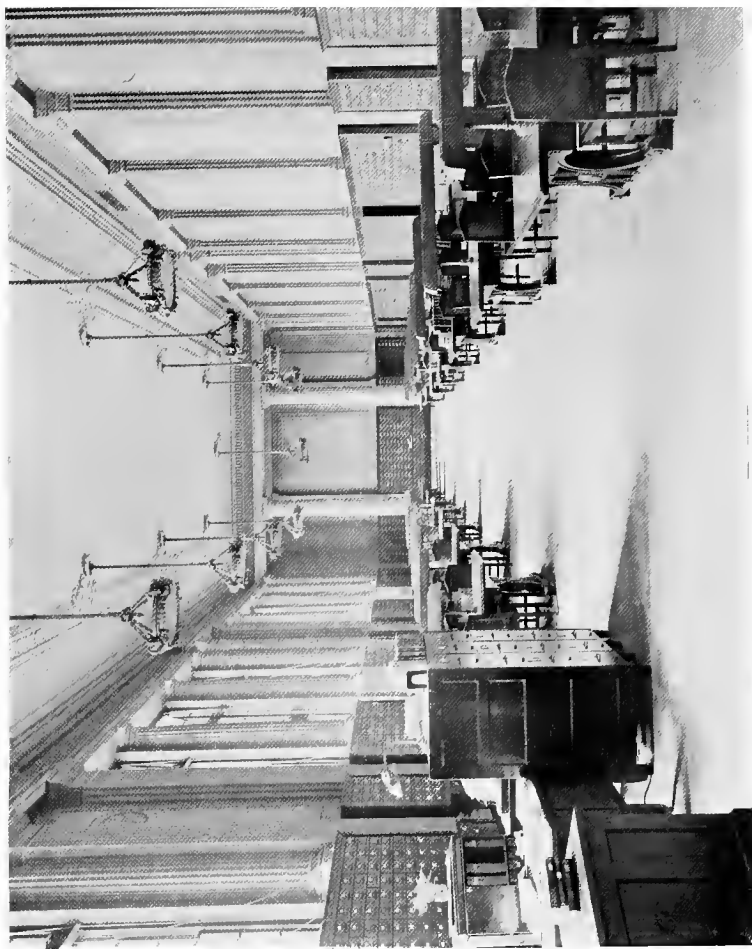
Under the names of voluminous authors, as Shakspeare, it has been found necessary to subdivide the mass of cards into several groups: (1) Complete works; (2) Partial collections; (3) Single works; (4) Works about Shakspeare. When this is remembered, the arrangement will not seem confused.

The cards are so arranged that the drawers read down, in single vertical tiers, and the cards in each drawer read from front to back. To obtain a book from the shelves after finding its card, copy the call number in the upper left corner of the card and give the author and short title: for example: $J^{824.52}$ is the call number of one edition of Joseph Addison's works. If volume 5 only is desired, write $J^{824.52}$ on the slip provided, also the words "Addison. Works, vol. 5," and take the slip to the loan or reference desk.

REFERENCE SECTION

It is through this section that the Library performs the greater part of its direct personal service to the people of the State. The reference room is open daily from 8.30 a. m. to 10 p. m. and the time of a special staff of librarians is given to meeting the needs of readers and borrowers.

Inquiries by mail. Scarcely less in volume and importance is the reference work carried on by correspondence. Letters from all over the country bring requests for information. The Library encourages such inquiries from persons who can not visit the Library in person and attempts to answer all reasonable requests no matter whence they come. Certain limitations in the amount of time that can be devoted to inquiries by mail are made necessary by pressure of regular work on the reference staff. The mail brings many requests involving more extended search than the Library can undertake. It brings many requests which lack the definite elementary statements needed as clues to further search. It brings



PERIODICAL REFERENCE ROOM

many requests for transcripts of books, manuscripts, or articles in periodicals. It seems desirable therefore to indicate with some definiteness what the Library can undertake to do and what limits it has been found necessary to observe in inquiries by mail.

The Library will gladly answer questions of the following kinds:

1 Inquiries as to its possession of any particular books, manuscripts, newspapers or periodicals, if the same are accurately listed. Full name of author, date, place and name of publisher should be given if possible.

2 Requests for brief lists of authoritative material in the Library on any subjects within its scope.

3 Requests for references to bibliographies or sources likely to be of use in study of any subject within the scope of the Library.

4 Inquiries concerning particular facts in history, especially the history of the State of New York or concerning the government or administration of the State, provided the inquiry does not involve extended search.

5 Requests for information desired in order to purchase out-of-the-way books; the author of a book of known title; date, publisher or probable cost or value of a specified book, etc.

6 Inquiries as to the source of a given quotation, if it can be readily obtained. Extracts from books in the Library will be furnished only when quite moderate in extent and only from books not readily available through local libraries or through the trade.

For genealogical inquiries an examination will be made of the catalog of the Library and of printed indexes, and promising references selected. If a reference seems obviously to be the one sought, a further examination of the book referred to will be made and the result noted. A particular date or name will be verified from a cited source, but no extended genealogical research will be undertaken. It should be particularly noted by beginners in genealogical work that definite information concerning the history and migrations of at least a few generations of a family is a necessary prerequisite to any genealogical search.

The Library must refer to the professional genealogist the inquirer who wishes his or her family tree constructed and presented as a finished product. It is obliged, as well, to decline to make extended copies from printed or manuscript genealogies.

Tracings of coats-of-arms will be furnished only when sufficient genealogical data is given to identify the armorial device with the family.

Photographs of rare illustrations, maps or other material can be arranged for at the inquirer's expense. Here, as in all cases involving outside professional help, the Library will endeavor to refer the inquirer to persons whose charges are believed to be moderate.

DEBATE SERVICE

The Library has recently undertaken the upbuilding of a special debate collection consisting of books, pamphlets and clippings on important social, economic and political questions, on the principles of debating and on the organization and conduct of debating societies. The Library is ready to assist debating teams in schools, colleges and clubs in the selection of subjects, in bibliographical work and by the loan of material under the regulations governing interlibrary loans.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN SYSTEM

Supplementing the traveling libraries is the interlibrary loan system. The traveling libraries work is organized to meet the normal demands of study clubs, local libraries and individual readers without adequate library facilities. The collection of books from which traveling libraries are formed, is selected with reference to these demands.

Somewhat different are the needs of the special student, the historian, the man of letters, or the scientist. A much wider range of books and more specialized treatises are needed. This service the Library seeks to render through its interlibrary loan system. In its special fields the Library contains many books, which on account of their rarity, cost, or specialized character, are to be found only in the largest libraries. Such books with rare exceptions can be loaned within the State to promote original research or serious study.

Public and school libraries may in the same way meet more adequately the temporary special demands of their patrons and supply material needed for the study of subjects not adequately treated in their own collections. The State Library is thus a great central library standing back of each local and school library and honoring their drafts on its resources as required to meet their special needs. The Library regards this interlibrary service as highly important and welcomes inquiries of any kind relating to it. For regulations governing interlibrary loans, see page 26.

DIVISION OF EDUCATIONAL EXTENSION

Closely allied with the work of the State Library, and under the supervision of its Director, is the work of the Division of Educational Extension, which comprises the following activities:

Public libraries. By its official visitors the division promotes new library organizations and, when the requirements have been met, recommends them to the Regents for charter and registry. It inspects all registered libraries, distributes money allotted to them by the State, and approves lists of books bought with this money and the equal amount raised from local sources. Assistance is given in planning or remodeling buildings and in securing by the work of its organizers the best arrangement of books, a suitable catalog and proper methods of administration. It also receives the annual reports of the libraries of the State and prepares a summary for the Legislature.

Traveling libraries. Libraries containing from 25 to 100 volumes are sent to communities having no public library on application of five resident taxpayers, and also to schools, libraries, study clubs, granges, churches, or any recorded organization needing books for reading or study. The library may be general in character or on a special subject, and may be kept six months, sometimes longer if needed. Ten volumes are lent for three months to an individual or single family with the privilege of renewal for a like period.

Study clubs. Clubs which agree to carry out an approved course of study are registered by the division and assistance is given in preparing programs and selecting suitable books.

Programs of study and syllabuses covering a wide range of subjects, with other aids to study, are furnished registered clubs. The requirements for registry are: five or more members, an annual report, a course of study approved by the division, and meetings extending over at least 10 weeks. Besides the traveling library, which may be retained as late as June 1st, pictures illustrating the subjects under study may be borrowed from the Division of Visual Instruction of the State Education Department.

No fee is charged for the first 25 volumes where books are available to all members of the community. When more than 25 volumes are ordered, a fee of 50 cents is charged for each additional 25 volumes.

For study clubs, granges, private institutions, etc. the fee is \$2 for 25 volumes and \$1 for each additional 25 volumes sent in the same shipment.

For individuals the fee is \$1 for ten books for three months. They may be renewed for three months for 50 cents additional.

Transportation charges to and from the nearest railroad, boat or stage office are in all cases paid by the State. Local cartage is paid by the borrower.

LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND

This collection contains over 2500 volumes printed in embossed type. It includes textbooks and music, periodicals and general literature. Any blind reader in the State may borrow from this library without personal expense, the books being carried free in the mails. Through a special appropriation the Library is able to add a few titles each year to the number of books printed for the blind. Of the 96 books so printed all are in New York point, which is the type of the greater part of the collection and the one taught in the New York State schools for the blind. American and English Braille, Line letter and Moon types are, however, fairly well represented with over 800 volumes.

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

This school, the first of its kind, was established in 1887 to supply the demand for trained librarians. In its twenty-five years' history it has steadily raised its entrance requirements and extended its curriculum. Candidates for admission must be graduates of colleges approved by the Education Department and meet certain standards of character and fitness for the work. The two-year course leads to the degree of bachelor of library science. Over 2100 library positions have been filled by the 670 students of the school.

Summer course. A summer course of six weeks, conducted by the faculty of the winter school, offers instruction to those already holding paid library positions or under appointment to such positions in public or school libraries. This course is especially planned to meet the needs of librarians and assistants in New York State, but a few candidates from other states may be admitted.

Nearly four hundred young men and women of New York State have, as students, received professional training here and by far the greater part of the principal public and college libraries of the State have at some time had the services of librarians or assistants trained at the school. A large number of staff assistants of the State Library, who have also received training in special lines of library work through partial courses in the school, are giving expert service in other departments of the State service.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The history of the New York State Library is of particular interest. Not only did it rank until the destructive fire of 1911 as the greatest of American state libraries, but even that disaster was unable to affect this pre-eminence for any length of time. If its collections are today, and must remain for some time, inferior to those of the old library, it has refused to narrow its ideal of service or contract its circle of influence. It holds, therefore, a broader conception of its function and has realized a larger part of that conception than any other state library.

Historic names are connected with its history. De Witt Clinton had a hand in its founding and purchased its earliest collections. For 70 years the Regents of the University of the State of New York have fostered and guided it. Romeyn Beck, Henry A. Homes, John V. L. Pruyn and Alfred B. Street saw to it that its collections were rich in literature, science and history. Alexandre Vattemare obtained for it rich gifts from European countries, and Melvil Dewey made it a dynamic force throughout the State.

Like most state libraries, it had its beginnings in the laws and other documents received by the State from the United States and from other states in exchange for its own publications. These soon became so considerable in amount as to require special attention and by act of Legislature April 21, 1818, the New York State Library was established. By the terms of this act a room in the Capitol was set apart "for the purpose of keeping therein a public library for the use of the government and the people of this State." It further provided "that no book, map or other publication shall be at any time taken out of the library for any purpose whatever." "For the purpose of carrying this act into effect" the Legislature "appropriated the sum of \$3000, and also the further annual sum of \$500." Six hundred volumes were purchased in 1819, the committee making such a selection, De Witt Clinton reported, "as would best meet the needs of the Legislature and correspond with the character of the State." In 1835 the library contained 5000 volumes "chiefly standard works in American history, politics and legislation."

A special appropriation of \$2500 is reported in 1841 as having been spent chiefly for books on civil engineering, mineralogy, geology and statistics.

During its early years the Library was in charge of various State officers as ex officio trustees. As it gradually grew in size it became evident that better supervision could be provided by a more permanent board, and on May 4, 1844, it was transferred to the custody and control of the Regents of the University of the State of New York. The Regents state in their first report that "they were desirous to show as early as possible

that they esteemed the purchase of books relating to our own State and country of paramount importance," for the general department and they recommended increased resources in education, political economy and practical science. In 1854 the Library was removed to a building specially constructed for the purpose, facing on State street and connected with the old Capitol by a two story corridor. This building was 114 feet long by 48 feet wide. The law department occupied the ground floor, and the general library the second floor. When it was constructed the Legislature prescribed very definite limitations regarding its size, lest it should be unnecessarily large; but within ten years its shelves were full. In 1878 Henry A. Homes, the librarian, described the library as one of the most complete in the country in law and American history, as abundantly supplied with English, Dutch and European history and as containing a representative collection of standard English literature. The Regents determined in 1879 to devote a large part of the available funds to the enrichment of the special collections. For the law library they recommended approximate completeness in American law and liberal purchases in international and foreign law. For the general department they were unwilling to limit the library to a policy which would strictly exclude purchases outside the field of legislation and American history, while agreeing heartily with the policy of special development and preference in these fields. "As an aid to officers of the government, legislative, executive, administrative, and judicial, special prominence ought to be given to the whole range of political and social science. Whatever pertains to the science of government in its broadest sense has a peculiar and special place in a library for the aid of those that are to administer government. Whatever illustrates the history, character, resources and development of the State, past, present and future, should be collected and preserved." This includes a wide range, for the "history of the State involves to a large extent the history of the sister states and Europe. It includes the geology of the State, its geography, its agricultural and mineral resources, its commerce and manufacture, its intellectual government and

career, its religious, moral, intellectual and educational systems. In this connection the periodical publications of the State, general and special, and newspapers, which illustrate the daily life of the people, should be largely included."

In 1883 progress on the new Capitol required the demolition of the old Capitol building and the State Library building. In September and October of that year the Library was therefore transferred to temporary quarters on the second floor, north side, of the new Capitol.

The Library remained in these temporary rooms till early in 1889, when it occupied portions of the third, fourth, fifth and sixth floors of the west end of the new Capitol. In less than twenty years this space became so cramped as seriously to handicap the work of the Library and to make it necessary to store many thousand duplicates in a warehouse. In 1906, the Legislature made provision for a separate building for the New York State Education Department, including the State Library (Laws of 1906, chapter 678), but before the building was completed the fire of March 29, 1911, swept away practically its entire collection.

In spite of the utmost effort to save everything that fire and water had left of the old collection, the salvage was pitifully small.

The catastrophe is probably the greatest in modern library annals. The burning of the Kaiserliche Universitäts und Landes Bibliothek in Strassburg during the Franco-Prussian War did not destroy so many books. The fire at Biblioteca Nazionale in Turin (1904) was notable for the large number of rarities and manuscript treasures lost, though no more, numerically, than 25,000 books and 2000 manuscripts were destroyed. The combined library losses at San Francisco in 1906, while perhaps aggregating nearly half a million volumes, were not comparable in the character of the books and manuscripts burned. At Albany a round half million of books, three hundred thousand manuscripts, the costly apparatus of administration — all these, forming a collection ranking with the first half dozen in the western hemisphere and among the first twenty in the world, were swept away in a few hot and disheartening hours.

The fire of 1911 is a matter of history. The Library is now housed in a well-arranged and beautiful building. It is rebuilding its collections with remarkable rapidity and looks forward to resuming its place in the educational life of the State with undiminished efficiency.

THE STATE LIBRARY AND THE CITIZENS OF NEW YORK STATE

The State Library exists equally for the organized state government, the schools and other cultural institutions of the State, and for the private citizen. As a State institution it exists primarily to promote efficiency in government. As a reference library it aims to promote research. As part of the educational system of the State it cooperates with libraries, schools and study clubs in the broad work of education.

To the citizen of the State it offers books of all kinds, books for entertainment, books for instruction, books for research. Where there are no libraries it offers small collections of books to be used in the homes of the people; where libraries or registered schools exist, its system of interlibrary loans places the resources of the Library at the disposal of the citizen. It meets the demand of the citizen for a larger range of reading than his own resources or those of the local library can supply. It offers material for the special study of topics not adequately treated in small collections as well as the special treatise required by the research of the historian, the man of letters, the engineer, or the scientist.

PUBLICATIONS

The publications of the State Library are described and listed in Handbook 6, part 2, of the State Education Department. Copies will be sent free to any persons interested.

Besides its annual report the Library has published five series of bulletins. The legislation series includes, besides occasional monographs and lists, three annual bulletins which index and review the laws of the various states and digest topically the governors' messages. The history series (no longer published) relates to early

New York State history, including reprints or calendars of valuable manuscripts. The bibliography series comprises classified lists of books on various subjects, or relating to individuals or places. This series includes the annual list of best books of each year, which is sent on request to any library. The Library School series embodies lists, outlines, problems and monographs on subjects relating to library economy or the courses of instruction given in the New York State Library School. These bulletins appear also in the bound annual reports of the Library.

New York Libraries is a quarterly magazine devoted to library affairs and interlibrary relations in New York State. It is sent without cost to all libraries and members of library boards in the State, making application. To others it is sent postpaid for 25 cents a year or 10 cents for a single copy.

RULES

Suggestions for making the Library more useful are invited and any reader having cause for complaint will greatly oblige the Director by reporting the facts personally or by letter.

1 Ignorance of rules. As these rules are publicly posted in the Library and a copy is given to every borrower, no violation of them will be excused on the plea of ignorance.

2 Suspension of rules. No Library rule may be suspended except by official action. Any request for such action should be submitted to the Director in writing.

3 Hours of opening. The Library is open for readers and borrowers from 8.30 a. m. to 10 p. m. except during July and August, when it closes at 6 p. m. The Library is closed Sundays and on July 4, Thanksgiving day and Christmas. On other holidays and on Saturdays it is open during the regular hours. The business departments are open from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. except on holidays. On Saturdays they close at 12 m.

4 Decorum. Quiet and order must be observed in the reading rooms. No loud or unnecessary talking is permitted. Begging, the circulation of petitions and the sale of articles are prohibited.

5 Preference. State officers shall be given preference in the use of any and all books in the Library when needed for official use.

6 Access to shelves. No one but officers of the Library may have access to its private rooms or shelves, unless accompanied by an attendant or holding an official shelf permit.

7 Reproductions. No tracings or reproductions by photography or otherwise are permitted without the approval of the Director or the reference librarian.

8 Injuries. Notes, corrections of the text or marks of any kind on books belonging to the Library are forbidden. Any person violating this rule or otherwise injuring property of the Library must make good the injury or reimburse the Library for all costs of replacing such property. The borrower is responsible for all losses or injuries which occur to a book while it is lent to him, either for reference or home use. Books are assumed to be in proper condition when issued and if they are found to be mutilated or defaced the fact should be reported without delay at the loan desk.

HOME USE

9 Borrowers. Regents of the University, members of the Legislature, judges of the Court of Appeals, justices of the Supreme Court, heads of the several State departments, their deputies and clerks officially resident in Albany, all institutions in the University, and such other libraries, institutions or individuals as may be registered as having special claim on its resources in some department, may borrow books subject to recall if specially needed.

10 Loans. Books will be delivered only on personal application or on a written order. No borrower may transfer his privilege or borrow books for the use of others.

No borrower may keep from the Library, without the Director's written permission, more than three volumes at a time, nor any volume longer than two weeks without renewal.

11 Restricted books. As the State Library is primarily a reference library, only such books are allowed to circulate as will not seriously hamper the reference work of the Library. Books in special collections, indicated by a letter preceding the call number, and newspapers and periodicals, bound or unbound, are for reference and are lent only in special cases and on a written permit. Current literature and fiction in the State Library are for preservation and reference and are lent only to State officers and employees residing in Albany.

12 Fines. Books issued on call slips are for use in the reading rooms only. Any person taking a book from the Library without having it charged at the loan desk will be fined 50 cents for each offense.

13 Renewal. A single renewal for a period of two weeks may be secured either in person or by a note addressed "Loan Desk, State Library, Albany, N. Y.," but the sender must take all risks of the mail. No book will be renewed if reserved by another reader.

14 Reserves. Any book in circulation except fiction will be recalled at the end of two weeks if needed by another reader. On leaving title of book and name and address at the loan desk, notice will be sent the borrower when the book is available and it will be held for him two days.

15 Recall. All books are subject to recall at any time, and when recalled must be returned immediately.

16 Books not returned. Any book not returned after one week's notice may be sent for at the expense of the borrower, and if not

returned within one month after such notice may be considered lost, in which case the borrower must pay its value.

17 Violation. For wilful violation of any Library rule, for failure to pay any fine or replace a lost book the Director may exclude the offender from all further use of the Library.

LOANS OUTSIDE ALBANY

The State Library recognizes as one of its most important functions the assistance it is able to give to local libraries, schools, colleges, study clubs and individual investigators throughout the State. In offering to supplement with brief loans the limited and more popular collections of public and school libraries, it tries to make more widely useful works that are not otherwise accessible either because of their rarity, price or specialized character. In its special collections the State Library possesses many books to be found only in the largest libraries; these are, with few exceptions, available for use by any registered institution.

18 Registered institutions. The State Library may lend to local libraries, schools, study clubs and other institutions registered with the New York State Education Department, such books as can be spared for temporary use outside of Albany; but rare and restricted books (see 11), books merely popular in character or such as local libraries may reasonably be expected to supply shall not be lent.

All applications for books must be made through the librarian of a local library, the principal of a school, or the secretary of a club.

19 State officials. State officers not officially resident in Albany may borrow for official use such books as are not in frequent demand at the State Library.

20 Individual investigators. Individuals not residents of Albany will be registered as borrowers only when they can not be served through a local library or other registered institution, and when the books are wanted for serious study or research.

21 Transportation. The borrowing library or individual shall defray all transportation charges, take all precautions in packing necessary to guard against possible injury in transportation and reimburse the Library for any loss or damage.

22 Length of loan. Unless otherwise specified, the maximum period of loan shall be two weeks, subject to a single renewal for the same period; but all books must be returned at the earliest date consistent with the special study for which they are borrowed.

INJURIES AND DETENTION

Laws of 1892, ch. 378, § 43-44

§ 43 Injuries to property. Whoever intentionally injures, defaces or destroys any property belonging to or deposited in any incorporated library, reading room, museum, or other educational institution, shall be punished by imprisonment in a State prison for not more than three years, or in a county jail for not more than one year, or by a fine of not more than \$500, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

§ 44 **Detention.** Whoever wilfully detains any book, newspaper, magazine, pamphlet, manuscript or other property belonging to any public or incorporated library, reading room, museum or other educational institution, for 30 days after notice in writing to return the same, given after the expiration of the time which by the rules of such institution, such articles or other property may be kept, shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$1 nor more than \$25, or by imprisonment in the jail not exceeding six months, and the said notice shall bear on its face a copy of this section.

"The distinctive event of the library year [1912] was the opening of the New York State Education Building at Albany, housing the State Library, whose destroyed collections have been so energetically replaced that the number of books already approximates and will present exceed the old figures. The new building, devoted in large part to library purposes, is one of the most dignified and noble in the country."

Library Journal, January 1913

"The noblest public building in the State is no longer the structure in which the executive and legislative departments have their seat, or a prison, or a hospital, or an almshouse. It is an education building. Perhaps the most splendid and commodious building devoted wholly to public education to be found anywhere in the world."

Educational Review, November 1912

